

JEMF

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

Vol. I, Part 1 -- October, 1965.

The John Edwards Memorial Foundation is an archival and research center in the area of recorded and published American folk music. It is chartered as an educational non-profit corporation supported by gifts and contributions. To facilitate the study of folk music, the Foundation has initiated a Reprint Series of scholarly articles and plans, for the future, a parallel Monographic Series.

To inform its officers and friends of Foundation activity, this JEMF Newsletter is established. It is intended to complement existing academic and amateur journals. The JEMF Newsletter shall publish:

- Foundation reports,
- Works-in-progress items from collectors and scholars,
- Notes and queries,
- Bibliographic, biographic, historical, and occasional discographic data,
- Reprints of material from ephemeral sources,
- Correspondence.

The JEMF Newsletter is open to anyone with a serious interest in recorded and published American folk music. Please address communications to The John Edwards Memorial Foundation at the Folklore and Mythology Center, University of California, Los Angeles, California, 90024.

The JEMF Newsletter will be published several times a year at irregular intervals. Each volume will run from July thru the following June, with each issue, or part, paginated consecutively.

Subscriptions to the JEMF Newsletter may be obtained by all interested persons at a rate of \$1.00 for ten issues. Back issues will be available at 25 cents each.

The JEMF Newsletter is edited by Norman Cohen and Ed Kahn.



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FIRST ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

JUNE, 1964 - JUNE, 1965

Since moving into an office in the UCLA Folklore and Mythology Suite in the new Social Science Building on June 1, 1964, the John Edwards Memorial Foundation has made strides forward, and met with enthusiastic response from those who have learned of its presence and plans.

Though the Foundation officers began organizational work in the summer of 1961, it was not until the JEMF received a \$5,000 pilot grant from the Newport Folk Foundation and moved into its new office that real work was able to get under way. At that time, the Foundation hired a part time secretary to begin the tedious job of indexing and organizing holdings to make them of maximum use to interested persons.

Our fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. Our annual progress reports will therefore be issued annually sometime after the beginning of the new fiscal year. Because we began operations on June 1, 1964, this first annual report actually covers a period of thirteen months. During this period of time we have undertaken several projects which will undoubtedly take many years to complete. Of these, the following four are currently receiving the most attention:

1. Index of songs published in song folios. We have begun an index, which will be kept up to date as new items are acquired, of songs published in song folios. Holdings

of folios include nearly 30,000 songs. As far as possible, variant titles are being cross filed to facilitate easy access to obscure material.

2. Index of artists represented in song folios. Each folio, as it is processed, is indexed by the artists represented in the folio, so that researchers interested in particular artists can easily find all of the folio references to that artist.

3. Index of ephemeral journals. Holdings in fan club and other ephemeral journals that are seldom found in libraries are particularly rich. To date we have complete or partial runs of fifty such periodicals. The use of these journals is limited, however, until detailed indices are prepared. Eventually comprehensive indices for these publications will be completed so that researchers can easily find pertinent information in their area of investigation.

4. Index of recordings. As time permits, we are indexing the recordings which we have in order to facilitate easy access to this material and also to enable us to learn which important items we are missing so that we can begin acquiring additional holdings. Until current holdings are fully indexed, we cannot begin buying additional recordings because of the possibility of duplication. The preparation of a thorough index is extremely time consuming, but the project will begin in the near future, as time and funds permit.

In addition to these four ongoing projects, a number

of important signs of growth have taken place:

June. We moved into our office and began the normal work of establishing new office procedures as well as of organizing holdings. (Much of the holdings had been carefully stored in boxes since being shipped from Australia in 1961; some was donated more recently.)

July. In the interest of using the most efficient archival techniques, Archie Green, Librarian of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois, visited UCLA for a month and served as JEMF consultant. During this period he made extensive recommendations based on careful study of archives such as those of the Archive of New Orleans Jazz located at Tulane University, and the Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Hollywood), both of which have certain problems similar to ours. Based on the results of Mr. Green's recommendations, general plans for archival procedure were determined and JEMF "vertical files" were established. The vertical files are arranged under the three basic headings -- artist, song, subject -- and contain ephemeral information such as newspaper clippings, articles, brochures, handbills, posters, programs, and related memorabilia.

August. Almost as soon as we moved into our first office in June, we realized that we needed more space, and in August we moved to larger quarters across the hall. This added space has enabled us to keep all of our holdings in one general office rather than to house some material in supplementary storage places. During August, the initial

general descriptive brochure on the Foundation as well as the first number in the Reprint Series were issued. But the most important development during the month was the acquisition of an extensive and significant collection of "race" records. Collector-etymologist Peter Tamony (of San Francisco) donated his records to the Foundation. This collection of nearly 2600 rare discs, centering around the 1920's and 1930's, marks our first major acquisition in Negro music. Although a full appraisal has not been made, this collection is valued at more than \$10,000.

September. The second Reprint was issued.

October. At long last, record racks were built to specification and installed in the office. These racks will accomodate about 10,000 78 rpm records as well as nearly 1,000 Long Playing discs.

November. The Tamony Collection was unpacked, and an index of the records was begun. This rough index should be completed before the end of the year. Letters were sent out to nearly fifty publications which we have in our holdings and back issues, as available, were obtained to help complete our files. The subscriptions were also brought up to date.

December. We held our annual Board of Advisors' meeting in New York City to accommodate our Board members living in the East. The groundwork for a series of long playing reissue albums to be issued by the Foundation was initiated.

January. Following a suggestion that was made at the Board meeting, we began a project that will take years to

complete. A card file listing, in alphabetical order, all of the artists represented in the early record catalogs was begun. Segments of this list will be published from time to time in the hopes that individuals will be able to shed some light on these old artists and that eventually we will have a directory of either artists or their living relatives so that interviews can be conducted to help document each artist's role in the industry.

February. We were able to hire our first research assistant, a graduate student in folklore and history, who has an extensive background in both the commercial folk music tradition and archival work. As soon as sufficient funds are available, we plan to hire three research assistants a year: one to work on white tradition, one to work on Negro tradition, and one to work on general bibliographical and discographical problems.

March. We began indexing all of the records, dubs, and live interviews and performances in the original Edwards tape collection. Not only does this facilitate access to the items contained in that part of the Edwards collection, but it also served as a pilot study to determine some of the problems involved in indexing both records and tapes.

April. Plans for a series of radio shows utilizing records and data in the Foundation were begun. Barry Hansen, a graduate student in music and folklore, and noted blues authority, will produce and narrate the series, as well as script the initial thirteen week series, dealing with Negro tradition as represented on early recordings. We hope indi-

viduals around the country will prepare scripts to be used in future series. The programs will be available free of charge to radio stations desiring to carry the entire series, or any thirteen week section.

May. Under the Work-Study Program created by the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964, the Foundation, through the cooperation of the Folklore and Mythology Center at UCLA, was given one part time assistant. During the summer recess the part time status was changed to full time and a second full-time employee was also added to our staff. Under the Work-Study Program the Government pays for these student employees.

June. After thirteen months of skeleton operations, many of our office and archival procedures have become stabilized. Each step forward has been one of experimentation, as there is no comparable archive in existence and many of the problems faced are unique to our area of interest. To facilitate the work of both employees of the Foundation and visitors, we have prepared a Procedures Manual explaining our procedures. This manual is available free on request.

--Eugene W. Earle

It is encouraging to see at last the beginnings of the fulfillment of John Edwards' dearest wish--the acceptance of commercial country music as a subject for scholarly investigation. The first doctoral dissertation on the subject of which we are aware is Bill Malone's thesis, "A History of Commercial Country Music in the United States, 1920-1964", written at the University of Texas in 1965 under the supervision of Professor Joe B. Frantz. We are reprinting below the abstract to Malone's dissertation.

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One of the great American success stories is that of Country music and its development. Once confined to the more remote and inaccessible sections of the South, and rejected or scorned by those who considered themselves musically sophisticated, country music is now deeply rooted in American life and is, in fact, international in scope. Moreover, it is a multi-million dollar industry and one of the most durable forms of American entertainment.

Commercial country music is that music which developed out of the folk culture of the rural South. Although it has absorbed styles and influences from a multitude of non-white and non-country sources, the music has been created and disseminated largely by rural dwellers within the mainstream of the white Protestant Anglo-Saxon tradition. The music became "commercial" in the 1920's when entertainment entrepreneurs learned that a cash market existed for this musical form. Once country music became a commercial enterprise, it could not escape radical change and invasion from people and forces outside the rural culture. As a result, the music has become increasingly less "rural" and progressively more professional and akin to Tin Pan Alley popular music. Despite its present status, however, country music developed directly

out of rural folk styles. Its successive changes down through the years, though distasteful to many of its adherents, are primarily the results of those same factors that have served to pull the South from a static, rural status into the mainstream of American life: e.g., urbanization, industrialization, and the introduction of improved communications devices.

The commercial history of country music began during the 1920's while the music was still a recognizable part of the folk tradition. Its performers sang and played in folk-derived styles that were little different from those of preceding generations, and the early repertoires were heavily saturated with traditional songs, both American and British. Throughout the 1930's and 1940's, however, the folk orientation steadily declined. Regional distinctions within the music became blurred as regional styles were consolidated through the influence of radio, recordings, and roadshows. Motion pictures furthered this amalgamation of styles, superimposing on country music the romantic image of the "singing cowboy." As a result, the term "western" has become a companion designation for country music of almost synonymous meaning.

Commercializing and nationalizing trends that had begun in the 1930's were intensified by America's involvement in World War II, the catalytic agent that made country music both a national and international phenomenon. Defense migrations and the Selective Service partially uprooted a static Southern society and hammered at the Southern shell

of isolation. When the war ended, country music had infiltrated into virtually every section of the nation, and music trade publications had begun to take notice of the phenomenon. With the ending of wartime controls and the beginning of postwar prosperity, country music began its greatest period of material advancement. The music had now become a big business, and in the 1950's and 1960's it experienced its greatest commercial flowering as exemplified by the founding of the Country Music Association and the emergence of Nashville, Tennessee as a major recording center.

Throughout its development--from folk expression to big business--country music has been consistently reflective and representative of the society and the changes in that society which produced it.

JEMF ON THE AIR

Beginning this fall, thousands of radio listeners will be hearing recordings from the JEMF collection via a weekly half-hour program, OLD TIME RECORD REVIEW. The program, produced and announced by Barry Hansen, made its debut over Los Angeles' KPFK-FM Wednesday, September 15 and may now be heard each Wednesday evening at 7:00 throughout the Los Angeles area.

The first series of thirteen programs features Negro folk music as it appeared on "race" records in the 1920's and 1930's. Artists include Mississippi John Hurt, Skip James, Big Bill Broonzy, the Rev. J.M. Gates, Memphis Minnie, Peg Leg Howell and many others.

The second series will present Anglo-American music. Future series will include collections of topical songs and profiles of important artists. Since the selection concentrates on material not available on LP reissues, the program provides a truly unique opportunity to hear recordings otherwise inaccessible to the public.

The programs are prepared under the supervision of an Editorial Board composed of Norm Cohen, Barry Hansen, and Ed Kahn. The technical production is done at the Folk Music Laboratory at UCLA, which provides optimum reproduction of the early 78 rpm recordings.

The Foundation is happy to supply OLD TIME RECORD REVIEW on tape free of charge to radio stations desiring to carry any thirteen week series. Interested stations should contact the Foundation.

--Barry Hansen

JEMF REPRINT SERIES

Single copies of the following reprints are available from the Foundation free upon written request. Prices are 25 cents each on multiple and/or assorted orders. **ATION**

1. "The John Edwards Memorial Foundation, Inc." by Eugene W. Earle; "Folklore and Mythology at UCLA," by Wayland D. Hand and Mantle Hood. From Western Folklore, XXIII (1964).
2. "Will Roy Hearne: Peripheral Folk Song Scholar," by Ed Kahn. From Western Folklore, XXIII (1964).
3. "An Introduction to the Study of Hillbilly Music," by D.K. Wilgus. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).
4. "Hillbilly Music: Source and Symbol," by Archie Green. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).
5. "The Skillet Lickers: A Study of a Hillbilly String Band And Its Repertoire," by Norman Cohen. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).
6. "An Introduction to Bluegrass," by L. Mayne Smith. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).
7. "Hillbilly Music: Source and Resource," by Ed Kahn. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).
8. "Current Hillbilly Recordings: A Review Article," by D.K. Wilgus. From Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 78 (1965).

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available from the Foundation in single or multiple copies at the indicated prices.

1. Country & Western Spotlight: Memorial issue dedicated to John Edwards. Contains all material written by Edwards for Country & Western Spotlight during 1955-58. Also Edwards' biography and tributes to him. Price: 75 cents.
2. The Sunny Side Sentinel: Carter Family Fan Club Journal. April-October 1963: Special Carter Family Discography Issue. Complete Carter Family discography prepared by John Edwards. Price: 50 cents.
3. Program Guide to 3rd Annual UCLA Folk Festival. Contains biographies, photographs, and complete lp discographies of festival performers, including the Blue Sky Boys, Jimmie Driftwood, Son House, Doc Hopkins, and others. Price: \$1.00.

